

# THE LIBRARY ASSISTANT

THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE ASSOCIATION OF  
ASSISTANT LIBRARIANS  
(Section of the Library Association)

HON. EDITOR: T. I. M. CLULOW  
(Leeds City Libraries)

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## The Library Assistant Announcements

**T**HE next meeting of the London Division will be held jointly with the London and Home Counties Branch of the Library Association on Wednesday, 18th November, 1937, at Chaucer House, at 6.30 p.m.

Mr. A. R. Hewitt, Vice-President of the Section, will take the chair, and Mr. Frank Hickman, of Bermondsey Public Libraries, will read a paper entitled "If books could talk."

The Special General Meeting, called to consider the revision of the Association's General Rules, as circulated last month, duly met on 13th October and approved the draft with two amendments. The Rules as adopted are being circulated as a supplement with this issue of the journal.

### OFFICERS AND COUNCIL FOR THE YEAR 1938

In accordance with the decision of the Special General Meeting held on 13th October, nominations are invited for the following Officers and members of the A.A.L. Council :

Hon. Secretary, Hon. Treasurer, Hon. Editor, Eight members of the Council.

Nominations must be made by two or more members of the Association, countersigned by the nominee, and submitted in writing to the Hon. Secretary not later than Tuesday, 9th November. Should the number of nominations exceed the number of vacancies, ballot papers will be circulated with the December issue of *THE ASSISTANT*.

The remaining members of the Council will be elected as follows : President and Vice-President—nominated by the Council ; Seventeen Divisional Representatives—elected by the Divisions, in accordance with Rule 6C.

### EAST MIDLANDS DIVISION

The county of Northamptonshire is now included in the area covered by this Division, and all A.A.L. members in this county will automatically become members of the Division, to take effect at once.

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### LIBRARY ASSOCIATION ELECTIONS

Voting papers for the election of the L.A. Council for 1938 will be in members' hands by the time they read this. This annual election is of great importance to the welfare of the profession, and hence to each one of us in it. While this has always been so, we would urge once more the vital character of the elections this year. Certain decisions were made at the Annual Conference at Scarborough, and these affected a wider range of policy than appeared on the surface. In some respects they compelled a *volte-face* on the part of the L.A. Council. This *volte-face* should never have been necessary; but since it was, it is the duty of every member to see that the Council is not allowed again to get so completely out of touch with the wishes of the body of members. We have in a previous number declared that to a great extent the fault lies with a section of the Council who believe that the affairs of the L.A. must be controlled by "a benevolent autocracy," and since we last wrote, this view has been re-affirmed in a contemporary. Hence we appeal to every voter to scrutinize the claims of this year's candidates with especial care, remembering that those elected will sway the balance for an autocratic, or a democratic policy in the L.A. We realize that in many cases our members will not themselves be personally acquainted with the views of those who appeal for their support, and we suggest that such members should write to their Divisional Secretaries, who will be pleased to furnish advice.

It is of the utmost importance that the greatest possible number of votes should be registered; it is of equal importance that they should be given only after full consideration of the issues at stake. We appeal for an informed vote, as well as for a heavy poll. And we are confident that members will respond, and in the result endorse the A.A.L. Council's consistent advocacy, often under severe provocation, of a more democratic handling of the affairs of our profession.

"A.A.L."

### LIBRARY ASSOCIATION INTERMEDIATE EXAMINATION

The Council of the Library Association has decided that candidates may in future take the Intermediate Examination as a whole or in two parts in any order, and that the effect of this shall also be retrospective.

Candidates for the December and subsequent examinations who have at any time passed in one part need only enter for the other part, and mem-

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bers who have passed in both parts separately should, provided they have the other requisite qualifications, submit applications for Registration as Associates.

P. S. J. WELSFORD, *Secretary.*

## Books and Films *(continued)*<sup>1</sup>

W. J. MURISON

**T**HIS is surely the most important link between films and books; the fact that these forces together can be employed with great benefits to the education of the people. In this capacity, little use has been made of the film in Great Britain; a few exceptions I will mention later. The reasons for this are that (1) education methods are conservative, (2) few institutions own cinematograph apparatus, and (3) cinemas cannot show instructional films to the best advantage. In elaboration of this third reason, I should say that the circumstances in a cinema are not suitable, the people are not receptive of serious information. The educational film would be in a programme of variety, drama, and comedy; the minds of the audience do not lend themselves to so rapid changes.

Fifteen years ago, Dr. Comandon, of the Laboratory of Biology, near Boulogne, "who even then had produced a number of scientific films, concerned mainly with the study of marine biology," wrote: "In our days, motion pictures are a necessity to the scholar who wishes to demonstrate to his colleague, transitory phenomena, delineate experiments or the general observations of things, beings or facts, whose records can only be preserved with accuracy by the film that reproduces living pictures at all." He is showing the superiority of the pictorial over the literary in the description of such experiments. He goes on to say: "The films are precious documents for the instruction of the pupil. Some of these films, properly arranged, have proved very useful for documentation, teaching and scientific propaganda. It is also a laboratory instrument that becomes more and more indispensable for modern research. Acting on time, as optical instruments act on space, it reduces all movements to a scale of our senses, thus enabling us to perceive certain movements which we could not follow because of their slowness (the division of a cell)."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This is the concluding instalment of Mr. Murison's paper. The first part appeared in "*The Library Assistant*," October, 1937.

<sup>2</sup> "Film in national life."

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The film, then, is being used as the scientist's notebook, the illustrations in which are more distinct than if he had been forced to re-create them himself. This use of the film is surely a proof of its overwhelming superiority over the printed book in the portrayal of material difficult to record verbally. Think, for instance, of an aeroplane in a spiral dive; the description of its movement is extremely difficult without the use of the word "spiral." Pictures, and especially moving pictures, make the meaning instantly clear.

Professor Brigstocke, of Liverpool University, suggested the use of the cartoon in mathematical diagrams. In the demonstration of stresses in arches, two Mickey Mouses could be the pillars and another could be the cross-part; Mickey Mouse could then sag at the appropriate places. Such a picture would make a more lasting impression than a diagram with all the forces marked by arrows.

In this connexion it may be argued that the use of a film to make descriptions readily comprehensible to children will tend to make them lazy in vocabulary. But this is not the case; the report, *Cinema in education*, published in 1925, made it quite clear that, far from being a sedative, the film is a stimulant which forces the children to create in words their own description of what they have seen. Films "enlarge the vocabulary and enrich the experience."<sup>1</sup>

Among the subjects which have been filmed and which are used in education centres in Great Britain are biology, languages, engineering, history, and geography.

In comparison with story films, very few documentary films have been published, and in public cinemas even fewer appear than should, because of the antipathy of the public to non-fiction works. The same preponderance of fiction appears in film-shows as in library reading.

Just as literary societies have been formed to criticize books, discussion groups to study broadcasts, so might meetings be held when the film excited the comment. Such a film might have an economic or social subject.

To revert to juvenile education, let us consider history. If we are to believe the history books, life up till very recently consisted of wars and peace treaties; there is no explanation made to the children of how the people lived in peace-time. Even the novels written around the Middle Ages are primarily concerned with the knights going to war and the gallantry of their deeds. The film may deal with the wars of those times, but cannot,

<sup>1</sup> "Cinema in education."

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in spite of itself, remain aloof from the social and peaceful pursuits of the time ; the evidence of lack of balance would be so much more noticeable in a film. Here, then, is a valuable place for the educational film. It can form quickly a picture of the period which would take a child weeks to create for himself. And, in adult teaching, a student who wishes to specialize in some period of history may not desire to wade through all the literature on the other periods. You may argue that he can find a general survey of history which will give him the desired information, but, like the child, he will waste more time. The Historical Association compared the merits of history teaching by films and books, and preferred the former.

It is admitted that the normal film has a circulation far greater than any new best-seller. In 1924, it was said, " Only the Bible and the Koran have an indisputably larger circulation than that of the latest Los Angeles film." <sup>1</sup>

Up till a few years ago, the printed word was the main force for the propagation of knowledge, culture, and entertainment. If that statement made in 1924 was true then, it must be even more so now, when the cinema has so multiplied its adherents.

And so must be more true the late Mr. Briscoe's suggestion in 1921, " That the popularity of cinematograph palaces must surely affect Public Libraries. Because cinematograph houses are on the increase everywhere, it does not necessarily imply that the popularity of public libraries has diminished in any way. There are some people who never did read, who are not intellectually capable of appreciating books, who under no circumstances would avail themselves of the facilities offered in the way of reading. There are others who still need to be aroused to the fact that they are missing many of the joys of life through not reading what is provided for them. As regards cinemas having a deleterious effect—it is a question, in fact, whether they have not, in some cases, been the means of directly introducing people to the pleasure to be derived from literature ! " <sup>2</sup>

Mr. Duncan Gray suggests, however, that the latter is not the case, but rather that the process is reversed. He says that seeing a film will not urge the spectator to read the book afterwards, but it *may* be the case that he will go to see the film of a book he has read. In this I cannot agree with Mr. Gray, for after such pictures as " David Copperfield," " A Tale of two cities," and " Les Misérables " were shown in Dunfermline, the demand for the books was greatly stimulated at the library.

<sup>1</sup> " Film in national life."

<sup>2</sup> Briscoe, Walter, " Library advertising."

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If a regular reader sees a film he enjoys, and the credit title says, "Adapted by Hugh Walpole from the book by Frances Hodgson Burnett," he is unlikely to let this pass without some search for the works of either author. He may have seen these books before, but was never tempted, because he had no idea they were so interesting.

In the film of "A Tale of two cities," there was a bibliography, and the first book mentioned was Carlyle's *French revolution*. If films are advertising books such as this, the library is sure to benefit.

Should libraries stock film versions of books? This is a question on which there is considerable difference of opinion. Are readers to be allowed to read editions of the classics from which whole sections of the story have been cut, editions which have been wholly rewritten with the main plot as the only trace of the original? The action of the original is recorded, but the literature has been taken away.

Some librarians are very loath to give the public what it wants, some must always be elevating taste and culture. After all, most readers of good literature are ready to admit an occasional descent into "murders" and "westerns." But these librarians are adamant: "No," they say; "the public must not be allowed to form false impressions of the classics." American methods may be very different from ours, but they have often been able to lead us to a solution of our problems. So let us hear the view recently expressed by an American librarian. "The motion picture and the radio are almost universal in their appeal. After many years, I am still astonished in the interest of all boys and girls in motion pictures and their prodigious memories for plots and actors and actresses. These are interests worth capitalizing. By all means, let us buy movie editions of books: they are undoubtedly inferior in paper and printing in many cases, but they are good bait. . . . So, instead of sighing that the radio and the movies keep boys and girls from reading, let us use these interests to encourage reading."<sup>1</sup>

It may be relevant to that statement to quote another American, this time a psychologist; he says: "Children would rather listen to the radio than read, but would rather go the movies than tune in on broadcasts."<sup>2</sup> After studying the preferences of over three thousand children, he places the three interests in popularity: first, films; second, broadcasts; and last,

<sup>1</sup> Scoggin, Margaret, in the "Wilson bulletin," September 1936.

<sup>2</sup> Eisenberg, A. L., *ibid.*

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books. The preferences shown are not any different in British children, so it seems a natural conclusion that books of films are likeliest to be read.

Adults too, like film editions; so they should be added to the library. One book I have in mind is *Romeo and Juliet*; this volume contains the text by Shakespeare, the scenario, and the views expressed by the actors, the director, and others who contributed to the film. Besides the fact that all the material in the book is sound, the actual paper, printing, and binding are good. This is only one example; there are many others.

Should libraries recognize the local exhibition of some classic as a film? Should they give a display of the book such as booksellers give?

Again, there are a host of librarians who do not agree with such co-operation, even though it is beneficial to their libraries. Some suggest ignoring the shows altogether; another says that we should not exhibit the specific book alone, because in few libraries are there sufficient copies to supply the demand created by such a display. The last suggestion and the most practical is that of an exhibition consisting of books by the same author or of books on the same subject as the film. In a case like that of the film of "A Tale of two cities," either of these would be suitable. The complete works of Dickens might be displayed with his portrait, or a set of works on the French Revolution, preferably including those mentioned in the bibliography of the film; these might be set alongside pictures from the film. The pictures could be had from the cinema where the film was being shown.

Many authors have been filmed successfully, and yet their books do not receive the attention they merit. Such co-operation as I have mentioned would serve to increase their popularity.

Should libraries give film-shows of any kind? If my previous contention, that seeing films leads to reading, is true, then it would seem to be neglecting the advertisement and resources of the library if films were not exhibited. Mr. Briscoe, in linking the cinema with advertisement, spent most of his time describing lantern-slides of blatant advertisement, such as, "If you are interested in this film, you may care to borrow a book from the Public Library containing information upon this subject," or, "A book from the Public Library will tell you more about it"; but it is not from the showing of such slides that the benefit is to be reaped. Besides, such advertisement could be just as easily and effectively presented to a greater public by being made into posters and stuck up on hoardings. Mr. Briscoe admitted the great force of the latter.

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The best way of attracting readers by exhibitions of films is to have a projector belonging to the library and to show with it classics of film production. All film-shows should include at least one adaptation from a book, or some educational film which will lead the spectator to some books on the subject. For instance, there is little use in showing a film on Bee-keeping if the library cannot supplement the information given in the film. Children, too, should be given opportunities of seeing educational films. As I said earlier, children are more interested in pictures than in words, but if they saw a film which held their interest, they are sure to want some further material on the subject. This is shown by the reception of "Found in a book," shown in many secondary schools in America. The subject of this film is the use of library resources and reference books. In a Dakota high school, the students wanted to know more—"for when the end came, they groaned in regret."<sup>1</sup>

Mention has been made, in the 1937 edition of Brown's *Manual*, of a new use which has been made of films in libraries : it is being used to copy rare books so that the original can be preserved from wear. Another advantage of this copying process is its economy of space and of cost. On 16-mm. film—that is the size generally used in institutions other than cinemas—a whole newspaper page could be compressed into a space no greater than that occupied by a stamp. If figures convey its benefit better, 2,000,000 pages can be stored in a cubic foot. The cost of making a film copy is about the same as that of a printed copy. In this use of photography, of course, the camera need not be of the cinematic type, but the cinema projector can be used for the exhibition of copies made.

Just as there are libraries of books, there are "libraries" of films. Here there is a close parallel between the two media. Some films, once thought to be the peak of production, are now only valuable in showing the progress of the cinema ; the very old specimens are regarded with some of the deep interest we have in incunabula. The British Museum and other libraries owning rare books often publish copies of these ; so it is with film libraries which make reprints of the originals and distribute them.

The greatest public film library is a department of the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Here the main aims are to collect and catalogue as complete a record as possible of films, and to arrange for series of programmes and exhibitions, just as the Museum has done for sculpture, painting, and the other arts. The President of the Museum said : "The

<sup>1</sup> Warren, Esther W., in the "Wilson bulletin," December 1936.

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expansion of the Museum to include a department of motion pictures has long been contemplated. As our charter states, the Museum is 'established and maintained for the purpose of encouraging and developing a study of modern art.' The motion picture is the only art peculiar to the twentieth century. As an art, it is practically unknown and unstudied. Many who are well acquainted with modern painting, literature, drama, and architecture are almost wholly ignorant of the work of such directors as Pabst, Pudovkin, and Seastrom, and of the creative stages in the development of men like Griffiths and Chaplin, yet the films which these and other men have made have had an immeasurably great influence on the life and thought of the present generation."<sup>1</sup>

And now, I will refer to two articles by Mr. Pottinger; the first is the bibliography, "Literature of the film,"<sup>2</sup> and the second is his conference paper, "The Cinema and the library."<sup>3</sup> In both, he recommends us to books which are not so indispensable as he would have us believe. I do agree with him in his choice of Rotha, Arnheim, and Pudovkin as authorities on the cinema, and I think that if these are represented in a library and supplemented by the *Film in national life* report, there is little wanting in that library's film section. A more complete bibliography than either the National Book Council pamphlet or Mr. Pottinger's is to be found in Nichol's book, *Film and theatre*. While agreeing that it was necessary, in his conference paper, to give details of the origins of the cinema, I do feel that Mr. Pottinger might have dealt more fully with the film in its bearing on book issues, book purchase, and library publicity.

In conclusion, I admit my debt to the majority of the books in Mr. Pottinger's article and to many others, not noted by him, including Louis Golding. I have only sketched the film as it applies to books and libraries; my paper is not conclusive, merely suggestive—suggestive enough, I hope, to bring into the realm of your interests a subject which must merit more and more attention from the librarian.

NOTE.—*The author has revised the final paragraphs since the paper was read.*

<sup>1</sup> Goodyear, A. Conger, in the "Cinema quarterly," Summer 1935.

<sup>2</sup> Pottinger, M. C., in the "Library association record," June 1936.

<sup>3</sup> Pottinger, M. C., *ibid.*, June 1937.

## Valuations

STANLEY HOLLIDAY

**A**N annual report from *Lowestoft* is an excellent example of adequacy. It is brief, for letterpress and statistics together account for five pages only. It is modest both in make-up and contents. It is, in fact, likely to put one into an unnecessarily good humour. The year's work shows nothing sensational. There has been some local increase in reading, but it is borne on me that ups and downs in issue figures, though they bring excuses or self-congratulations full of sound and fury, signify—go on, say it—nothing. It is for that reason, my wind-blown friends (who, sternly spartan, choose not to titter nor to frown upon print or format), one looks at other things beside the bare skeleton or fully moulded form, as may be, of a library's report. And looking at and through *Lowestoft's* report I perceive neatness and a sense of balance, which is praiseworthy because it is not general. One thing else is to be remarked from this report, that is, the baneful influence of suburbanization upon library services. The inability of a single establishment to attract potential readers in outlying districts is admitted, and the result, I suppose, will be branches or deposit stations. Town planning, what crimes—no, I won't finish that one. We have slums or we are overcrowded. Excellent, then we will solve our problem by smearing our nasty selves all over the countryside. So runs the rote, and so erupts the garden village. And so must the library service bud, and branch, and split, dragged on the tail of half-witted housing schemes.

*Eastbourne* continues with its successful spadework. Extension of library facilities brought an embarrassing response, in that estimates of use were exceeded to cause overcrowding in temporary premises and the book stock experienced a parallel strain which appears to have been met and countered. The chairman's foreword reveals that certain gentry are still to be convinced that a library service has any value whatever. I will not be hasty; I will not wish that they fall over the cliffs on a dark night: I will merely hope that they may come to have personal experience of the job that is being done at *Eastbourne*. They'll change their tune.

Now hail, divinest Melancholy, and let us gaze upon a tale of woe. The *Free library of Philadelphia* is suffering from book starvation. And it proves it by a photograph in its annual report of the shelves of a children's branch library, the state of which made me think instinctively of the French

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Treasury. The past few years have seen the loss of two million issues, but it is difficult to take too gloomy a view of the present situation. Quite irresponsibly, I believe that adjustments are necessary at *Philadelphia*. Inability to provide further sums for book purchase is due to municipal difficulties beyond the library's control, while restrictions upon trust funds have left thousands of dollars lying idle. But even if it is temporarily impossible to augment a book fund of £9,500, I hope I will not be thought a blackleg if I permit myself a gentle whistle at a wages and salary bill exceeding £111,000. If the latter figure is high, however, it surely indicates the presence of a worthy and expert staff whose very existence makes resurgence inevitable when the shadow of depression lifts. It is hard, no, impossible, to hold that the fortunes of the library of this great city are doomed ever to decline.

On the other hand, *Birmingham*, which is comparable in size and finances with *Philadelphia*, reports a year of quiet development. The traditional form of annual statement shows that fresh sites have been acquired for still more district libraries, that stock has grown by 47,000 volumes, that there is nothing about which to rave in chagrin.

*Hendon* has now moved into the million *plus* arena, and the recent provision of another branch will further augment the use of this service. A feature of its report to which it seems worth calling attention (for in this matter *Hendon* is not alone) is that of book reservation. One branch took approximately 10,000 reserves in the year, over 250, for example, being received for one book. Does not acquiescence in such a state of affairs tend to defeat the purpose of a rate-supported public library? Money is diverted from normal channels to satisfy the abnormal needs of sensation-seekers. Reserve everything by all means, but on this scale a pay collection is called for apart from the public stocks, charged at the rate of sixpence to a shilling per volume. Otherwise there is no justification for the overheads of a penny library to be borne on the rate. The growth of co-operation in the South-East Region and the crystallizing out of specialized interests in the new London suburbs is reflected in the report, for information work and interloan have demanded a great deal of time and patience. The success of a thorough-going school libraries system has been equally remarkable with that of the lending departments, and there is little reason to doubt that *Hendon's* development will continue at a rapid rate for some years to come.

I turn away from reports, though others have claims to be heard—*Accrington*, fighting against congestion; *Kettering*, undertaking many

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activities for a small service; *Heston*, illustrating the unconventional and interesting design of its Isleworth branch; *Colne, East Ham, Chelmsford*—everywhere is to be observed some aspect of modern library development. I turn away, and come to something very different, which is a brochure issued by the *University of Minnesota* to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the first library school at Columbia University, one Melvil Dewey *docens*. The brochure contains three items: a playlet concerned with the first class in library science; an article by the chief of the John Crerar Library, which leads up to a well-directed kick at modern complacency in neglect of continued education by the profession; and a useful document on the "Growth of the library school idea," by Mr. Frank Walter, of Minnesota, which gives a brief account of the missionary spirit of the '90s, and summarizes post-war achievements. In some sense complementary to this brochure is Mr. Cowley's report on "Training for librarianship in the United States," detailed discussion of which is not in place here, but it is hoped to return to this report in a paper more directly on the subject of English library education. Suffice to note Mr. Cowley's recommendation, based on observation, of developments in American curricula, that the work of the London School should involve "a closer relationship between the training offered and the world of books" which recognizes, as Mr. Frank Walter would say, that principles with no application are of not much value.

A new-comer, so far as these columns are concerned, is the "Library record," a mimeographed monthly production from *Canterbury University College Library, Christchurch, New Zealand*. In essentials these sheets consist of a straightforward book list, with a first page of some routine notes. There is no especial point to which attention should be called, for this *Canterbury record* is scarcely weaned, being in its sixth month and still feeling its way. But we should welcome further issues, since bulletins have a way of blossoming overnight, and after a period of incubation are likely to achieve surprising things.

Three publications from *Derby County* bear the usual stamp of efficiency and worth from this source. These consist of a subject list—"Photography to-day"; an additions list, and an interesting pamphlet on "School museum service," to be run on much the same system as students' book loan, and managed from the library headquarters. Any development in the art of visual instruction is worthy of note, and this pamphlet may well serve as an appendix to the reports of Dr. Lowe and Sir Henry Miers.

Belated reference is due to two publications which are rather apart from

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the regular library material. First, the fifteenth number of "The Canadian catalogue," from *Toronto*,<sup>1</sup> which contains innovations by way of an author-index to the English-Canadian section and a useful directory list of Canadian publishers and publishers' representatives. This is now available to subscribers at less than cost price. Second, a reprint in pamphlet form of Mr. Stanley Unwin's article in "The Publisher's circular" on the Danish book trade organization. This organization, with its centralized and rigid control, is sufficiently effective to put ideas into librarians' heads. The economies which booksellers derive from cumulated bulk shipments and the obvious advantages gained by purchase through a central clearing-house make the contents of this pamphlet further ammunition for those who would see co-operative buying by libraries in England.

## Students' Problems : II

D. H. HALLIDAY

**I**MAY be taken to task for having implied in my introduction to this feature that its aim was to provide a short cut to examination success. Let me forestall criticism by disclaiming any such intention. Examinations and the examination syllabus are a system of guidance, a programme, for the organization of professional education and training, and no one, least of all among those who presume to guide the studies of others, must lose sight of this purpose. An intelligent knowledge of the subjects studied, betokening a background of efficient training, must be the primary aim in teaching, in the same way as it forms the standard of requirement of the examiners.

The attainment of this knowledge, however, is beset with difficulties and secondary considerations. Firstly, the standard of efficiency in many libraries is at present so unsatisfactory as to seriously handicap those of their staffs who are studying librarianship. Likewise (and this applies also to the larger and better-organized systems) the opportunities for professional experience on the part of junior assistants are so meagre as to be a travesty of the meaning of training and of the terms of their appointment as assistants. Thirdly, true knowledge cannot be obtained without economy of effort and the application of common-sense methods to the process of study—and unfortunately many students have not the slightest idea of how

<sup>1</sup> *Public Library, Toronto, 25 cents by subscription.*

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to control their studies. Moreover, the examinations find many candidates who, although possessing the required knowledge, fail to convey evidence of their understanding to the examiners. Thus it should be the aim of the A.A.L., as representing the interests of students, to promote better conditions, attempting in the meantime to overcome the outstanding difficulties of students by providing guidance both in their studies and the methods they adopt in preparation for the examinations. Such, in a brief restatement, are some of the aims of this feature.

This month some hundreds of students will be revising for the December examination, most probably to culminate as time grows short in a bout of feverish cramming which will undoubtedly diminish their chances of success. Of all the evils of mistaken method, cramming is the greatest. It cannot be denied that a certain amount of memorizing, differing in extent according to subject, is essential for our examinations. But there is no relationship between the memorizing which is a necessary adjunct to study and the cramming of words, phrases, and imperfectly understood ideas into an overloaded brain. Effective memorizing depends upon two psychological factors : depth of interest, and the purpose for which the facts are to serve. The requirements of the examination resolve these factors into the one purpose of *understanding* the subject—to treat it as a live and passably interesting part of professional work rather than a text-book subject of unrelieved dullness.

That is why a course of study lasting for a year or more is a necessary preparation. Students who have under-estimated a subject during the greater part of that time cannot hope to make leeway during the month or so which remains by the absorption of surface facts. A time factor for the digestion of these into deeper understanding is very necessary. As confirmation of this, I would instance the invariable experience of those who cram for examinations. At the time of the examination their minds are tired and confused ; clarity of thought and expression is hindered by the jostling of unrelated facts. But a few weeks, or maybe months, later they discover to their chagrin that their minds have freshened and cleared, and the recollection of elementary mistakes made in the examination is sufficient to bring a blush to their cheeks. In all respects they are at that moment better prepared to sit the examination than they were on the actual occasion. By an almost unconscious process, which cannot be hastened unduly, facts have become related to each other and to experience, merging into real understanding. The moral is obvious. Students who are embarking on a

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course of study should heed its warning. They must thoroughly understand each step of a subject before attempting the next. Matters of routine memorizing, such as the correct wording of definitions, etc., may be left until later, but the *ideas* they convey must be grasped and understood.

At the time of writing I have just received with feelings of profound relief my copy of *A Primer of book classification*, by W. H. Phillips, which will be reviewed elsewhere. It is a debatable point whether this new textbook will come as a greater boon to students or teachers of classification. To many who are entering for the December Intermediate Examination it will hold, I regret to say, their only remaining hope of success. Yet I realize, as Mr. Phillips himself realizes, that if this book is treated by students in the same detached, mechanical, and unintelligent fashion as other textbooks its effect will fall far short of our hopes. It provides facts and clarifies ideas with a special view to the needs of examination candidates, but its main purpose is as a stimulant. Its aim is the same as that proclaimed by its progenitor—that immensely useful and valuable series of cyclostyled notes entitled *Think for yourself!* Students can best show their gratitude to Mr. Phillips for voluntarily undertaking such a tremendous task by doing their utmost to obey that simple precept.

*Evolutionary Order in Book Classification.*—In practically every paper I mark I come across the phrase “evolutionary order” glibly used without the slightest meaning. This is one of the many reasons why Mr. Phillips’s *Primer* is so badly needed. But since no amount of emphasis appears to be sufficient to disillusion classification students, I welcome the following explanation from Mr. A. J. Walford (Lambeth) :

“ It still seems necessary to ‘debunk’ attempts to prove that any of the ‘Big five’ classification schemes possess evolutionary order. Students persist in weaving fine theories as to the grim, irresistible cavalcade—Matter and Force—Life—Mind—Record—regardless of the fact that *spheres of book knowledge* do not form fours in order of time, nor do they evolve out of each other as might new worlds in a cosmos. Evolutionary order presupposes, not only increasing complexity of structure, but a time factor. Imagine new classes, if you must, as so many wooden boxes hewn from one tree, correlated and parallel, but in no sense modulating into one another. One box may be painted scarlet and another pink, and it may be as well to associate the two to the exclusion of the blues, yellows, and greens, but that is as far as we can go with main classes.

“ Turn to subdivisions, and evolutionary order becomes more of a reality.

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It is most evident in the orders of the botanical and zoological sciences. It is followed, in a general sense, in history, and wherever a certain chronological sense is observed, whether the subject be pure literature (as divided in Dewey), or medicine, developing from anatomy to diseases and therapeutics, or mechanical processes, starting with the raw material and ending with the finished product, or music, from the solo to the choral symphony. The cause-and-effect theory of Brown smacks of evolutionary order, but it is really antithesis—a juxtaposition of two things which Brown himself claims as ‘logical,’ no more. Music may follow acoustics, but as a student wisely puts it : ‘ After all, do we listen to a Brahms symphony because it is a work of art, or because E flat has X” vibrations per second ? ’ ”

*New Regulations for the Intermediate Examination.*—Vague rumours of high expectancy have just been confirmed by the resolution of the L.A. Council revising the regulations for the Intermediate syllabus. Candidates may in future take the Intermediate as a whole or in two parts in any order ; the effect of this is also retrospective. The development promises such a tremendous change that it is impossible to weigh it dispassionately at the moment. In one respect, however, the outcome is clear and boundlessly refreshing. It will bring new hope and enthusiasm to those who had lost both. Good luck to them !

Mr. W. A. Munford (Dover) writes in characteristic vein on the insincerities of Literary History students :

“ As a tutor for Elementary I always get great fun out of my students’ essays on the Restoration dramatists and the eighteenth-century novelists. They are all so hopelessly uncertain, not of their facts, but of the ‘ correct ’ approach. Usually I wither under a storm of stern, moral pulpity (Carlyle would have liked that word !), and I have yet to read an answer in which coarse, vulgar, immoral, crude, low, offensive—some or all of these (a recent answer had them all)—are not relentlessly provided. Now this attitude may be due entirely to the fact that none of my students has read anything more directly concerned with the literature of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries than their text-books, and I would be the first to admit that the connexion is not always obvious, but I am still hoping for a student who will take the risk and tell me why he likes Fielding, Smollet, Congreve, and Wycherley, or even why he dislikes them, provided that the approach is literary and not moral. Is it the influence of our nonconformist conscience which makes my students so uncertain of themselves ? ”

Mr. Munford’s complaint offers yet another instance of the detached

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and aloof attitude adopted by students to the studies which are supposed to educate them as librarians. While, from my knowledge of library assistants in their human moments, I hesitate to subscribe to his view that "some of them think or have thought that I really ought not to ask questions about such an embarrassing subject," I can readily believe that the "other personality" which students don before answering questions or sitting examinations may be shocked to the core of its unnatural being. I only hope that Mr. Munford may yet shock students out of their dual personalities, so that they may at length bring some reality to subjects which at present they glaze about with illusions and conventions.

[Please note that Mr. Halliday's address is now: Branch Library, Norbury, Croydon.]

## The Divisions

### DEVON AND CORNWALL

THE first General Divisional Meeting was held in the Lecture Hall, Central Library, Plymouth, on Wednesday, 6th October. The meeting was preceded by a tea, the profits from which will be devoted to Divisional Funds. Members were present from Devon County, Exeter, Launceston, Paignton, Plymouth, St. Austell, and Teignmouth libraries.

The Hon. Secretary-Treasurer reported a membership of 48 (now 50), which was a good commencement for the area. Apologies for absence were received from Miss Drake and Miss Brown (North Devon Athenaeum), Mr. Nichols (Hele's School, Exeter), Messrs. Bennetts and Williams (Cornwall County).

Mr. C. Harris, A.L.A. (Exeter City Library), Chairman of the Division, read a paper on "Modern library standards." His place in the Chair was taken by Mr. Ley (also of Exeter). Mr. Harris deliberately based his address on various chosen standards advocated at the 1935 L.A. Conference, but set himself the task of treating them from the point of view of an assistant desirous of making these standards practical achievements. By treating his subject in this fashion he gave his paper a correspondingly practical use and significance to those present. A few ideas from the discussion which followed will make this evident. *Miss Beasley*: "Our first responsibility to the 'uninitiated' reader is to make known to him as many different authors as possible and not to allow him to get into the habit 'I only like books by so-and-so,' which is psychologically an act of self-deception,

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which will impair the reader's capacity for appreciation and use of the library." *Miss Rendell* : " Branch libraries are the militant weapons of our work, for it is here that assistants are given most opportunities of personal contact." *Mr. Huddy* : " Personal service with fiction readers (be they ever so low-brow) is the groundwork whereby we may extend the use of these contacts with readers to other fields." Moving to the field of library publicity—*Mr. Snook* : " The ignorance of the public is our greatest problem. What are we to do to combat this ignorance when it rests in those who never use the library ?" *Mr. Langman* : " A campaign of national advertising of libraries would be of as much use in the sphere of education as is that of the Ministry of Health in the service of health." *Messrs. Boulter and Bristow* : " National publicity is the job of the Library Association. We can, and will, undertake local advertising. Newspapers can be useful to us and we can be useful to them. Lists, reviews, library corners, articles on the use of the library to the business man and the student—they are all news. Let us see that as a Division we make use of them."

The discussion concluded with a vote of thanks to Mr. C. Harris, proposed by Miss Singlez and seconded by Mr. Langman. In a "conversazione" which followed, a plan was outlined for the early publication of a local periodical. It is hoped to have the first issue ready for distribution at the next meeting of the Division.

### KENT

Forty-five members assembled at Kent County Library Headquarters, Maidstone, on Wednesday, 29th September. After a brief progress report by the Hon. Secretary, the Chairman of the Division, Mr. W. A. Munford, B.Sc., F.L.A., read a paper on "Non-professional education." The speaker, after defining the mental characteristics which he considered necessary for all librarians, went on to outline an educational programme most likely to produce those characteristics.

In the discussion which followed, the speaker was criticized for being London-minded and adopting an unjustifiably derogatory attitude towards the possibilities of acquiring culture in the provinces; for belittling the work of such organizations as the W.E.A.; and for setting a well-nigh impossible task for the assistant who, entering the profession at 16 to 18 years of age, had to acquire an external degree and the L.A. diploma, and in addition had to find time for comprehensive general reading and social activities. One speaker felt that university life robbed the undergraduate

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of opportunities for developing ability to deal with the infinite variety of social and mental types who make up the reading public.

After the meeting members were entertained to tea by Miss A. S. Cooke, F.L.A., County Librarian, and her staff. An informal tour of the headquarters buildings completed the programme.

### MIDLAND

The Birmingham and District Branch and the Midland Division of the A.A.L. Section held a joint meeting at Malvern on Wednesday, 22nd September. In the afternoon the very interesting moated manor house, Birtsmorton Court, was visited by kind permission of the owner, F. B. Bradley-Birt, Esq., B.A., F.R.G.S., I.C.S.

At tea in the Winter Gardens Café the members were welcomed by Dr. H. S. Pendlebury, M.A., M.B., B.Ch., Chairman of the Malvern Public Library Committee, after which they went to the Public Library, where, after an inspection of the recent extensions, the evening meetings were held.

Mr. W. Pearson (Reference Library, Birmingham) gave to the Junior Meeting a very workmanlike account of the library tour which, as the winner of a Francis J. Thacker Scholarship of £15, he was recently able to undertake. His paper was remarkable, not only for the very judicious selection of libraries which made up his itinerary—Manchester, Cambridge University, the Bodleian, the British Museum, and several public and special libraries in London—but also for his discerning criticism and appreciation of essentials.

The Library Association meeting followed, at which Mr. B. Oliph Smith, County Librarian of Herefordshire, read a paper on "Policy in the rural area." It is sufficient tribute to the excellence of Mr. Oliph Smith's paper to say that an audience in which municipal library workers preponderated was keenly interested in his very comprehensive statement of the problems with which county librarians are faced in their endeavours to provide an adequate book service. They were not less interested in his suggested solutions for these problems which comprised, *inter alia*, branches in the market towns taking full advantage of the regular weekly influx of the population of the surrounding areas and "distributor-borrowers" to act as the library's agents in bringing books to the tiny isolated groups of country dwellers who are very difficult to reach.

After an interesting discussion, the proceedings ended with votes of thanks to Mr. Oliph Smith for his paper and to Mr. J. Lucas, F.L.A.,  
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Borough Librarian of Malvern, and the Public Library Committee for the excellent arrangements made for the meeting.

### NORTH-EASTERN

A meeting of the Division was held at Sunderland, by kind invitation of Mr. J. A. Charlton Deas, M.A., F.L.A., Director of the Public Libraries, Museum, and Art Gallery. In the afternoon about 90 members assembled in the Art Gallery, where, in addition to the Permanent Collection, there were Loan Exhibitions of "Views of Old Sunderland" and photographs of "Life among the Bedouins."

Mr. Deas welcomed the members to Sunderland, and recalled some of the meetings and events which had taken place since the inaugural meeting of the Division some thirty-five years ago.

He then introduced to the members Mr. E. Tucker, Editor of the *Sunderland Echo*, who, in a brief informative talk, explained "The production of a newspaper." Dealing solely with the editorial and production sides, Mr. Tucker described the various processes of the work, from the coming in of the news to the going out of the printed newspaper. The thanks of the Division were accorded to Mr. Tucker for his talk and the practical illustration of it which was to come by Mr. A. Donnelly (Chairman of the Junior Committee) and by Mr. Deas.

Members then proceeded to the printing works of the *Sunderland Echo* and were shown by the Editor and members of his staff the news coming in "in bulk" from the news agencies and the reporting staff, the editing of the news, the sub-editing of the matter to fit the available space, the composing of the news on the Linotypes, the locking into formes, and the making of the flongs. Then they continued into the foundry for the casting of the plates from which the newspaper is printed, saw and "heard" the presses at work, and before leaving the building were each given a copy of the newspaper which had been "made" that afternoon.

At tea, which was kindly provided by the Libraries, Museum, and Art Gallery Committee, the Mayor of Sunderland (Alderman T. Summerbell, J.P.) welcomed the members, and, stressing the importance of libraries as a cultural and educational asset to the town, expressed the hope that the Association would not be long in coming back to Sunderland. A vote of thanks to the Mayor, Mr. Deas, the Libraries, Museum, and Art Gallery Committee, and the Sunderland staff was proposed by Mr. E. F. Ferry, the Hon. Secretary of the Junior Committee, and carried with acclamation.

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A short meeting of the Junior Committee followed, and the officers elected were Miss M. Schaeffer (Chairman) and Mr. A. King (Hon. Secretary-Treasurer).

The party then left for the Southwick Branch Library, where the special features of the building were explained by the Branch Librarian and other members of the Sunderland staff.

After the inspection of the Branch the members went to see the illuminations in Roker Park. The display was a most artistic one, for the delicate colourings of the lights lent charm to the natural beauty of the surroundings. The lake, with its illuminated gondola, bridge, and waterfall, was particularly admired. Lewis Carroll was a frequent visitor to relatives in Sunderland, and among the items he wrote there were : "The Walrus and the carpenter," and "Jabberwocky." Those who were lucky enough to get into the section depicting "Alice in Sunderland's wonderland," where the illuminated characters recited passages from the famous works, will long remember this novel ending to a Divisional Meeting.

## SOUTH WALES AND MONMOUTHSHIRE

The Divisional Committee held a meeting in September and discussed A.A.L. affairs since last Session. After finding where we stood, we commenced discussion on our activities for 1937-8. The following provisional programme was drafted :

1937		
20th October.	Cardiff.	Visit to B.B.C. and Roath Branch Library. Meeting at Central Library. Captain R. Wright, M.C. "County library in relation to the municipal library."
17th November.	Merthyr.	Mr. E. R. Luke.
22nd December.	Cardiff.	Annual General Meeting.
1938		
January.	{ Swansea.	Joint meeting with Welsh Branch.
23rd February.	{ Cardiff.	
30th March.	Pontypridd.	Mr. L. A. Burgess, F.L.A.

Some time ago a correspondent appealed for news of what the Divisions were doing. We are able to report an energetic Sub-Committee with Miss R. M. Sprague, A.L.A. (Pontypridd), as Hon. Secretary, wrestling with a

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scheme of Library Publicity for the area. Eventually it is hoped to make every Wales and Monmouthshire inhabitant realize that there are Public Libraries and that these libraries are useful to the said inhabitants.

*Membership.*—We have a good membership, but there is always room for an increase. Library assistants in the area who are not yet members will receive a form by return if they will please send a post-card to the Hon. Divisional Secretary.

## BOROUGH OF SCARBOROUGH

### Public Library

The Council invite applications for the position of Senior Assistant (male) at a commencing salary of £215 per annum, rising by annual increments of £15 to a maximum of £260 per annum.

Applicants must be Fellows or Associates of the Library Association. Fellows of the Library Association will be entitled to receive the sum of £20 per annum, and Associates £15 per annum, in addition to the scale salary.

The appointment will be subject to the provisions of the Local Government and Other Officers' Superannuation Act, 1922, and the successful candidate will be required to pass a medical examination.

Applications, together with copies of not more than three recent testimonials, should reach the undersigned not later than the 6th November, 1937.

W. H. SMETTEM,

Borough Librarian.

Public Library,  
Vernon Place, Scarborough.

## ST. PANCRAS BOROUGH COUNCIL

### Appointment of

#### (a) Male Junior Library Assistants. (b) Male Junior Clerks.

The Council invite applications for the above appointments. Salary, £70 per annum, increasing by varying annual increments to £200 per annum. Applicants must be not less than 16 years of age and have matriculated or passed an equivalent examination. Preference will be given to candidates possessing a knowledge of shorthand and typewriting. The appointments will be subject to the provisions of the Local Government and Other Officers' Superannuation Act, 1922, and the successful applicants will be required to pass a medical examination.

Forms of application may be obtained from the undersigned on receipt of a stamped addressed envelope, and must be returned not later than Friday, 12th November, next.

Applicants should state the particular appointment for which they wish to apply.

A. POWELL COKE,

Town Clerk.

St. Pancras Town Hall,  
Euston Road, N.W.1, October 1937.

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